

# THE BLOOMFIELD CITIZEN.

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## SCHOOL ROOM NEEDED.

REGISTRATION OF PUPILS NOW EQUALS  
SEATING CAPACITY OF SCHOOLS.

The Opening of the Spring Term will Bring a Large Influx of New Pupils—Plans Proposed to Meet the Demand for Class-Room—Cost of Enlarging Two School-Houses.

While general satisfaction is felt over the activity in the building trade here for the past three years, as manifested in the numerous new dwellings erected, the increased number of dwellings has increased the responsibilities of the town government, and the people are now confronted with some problems that are demanding immediate attention. One of the most important and serious among these problems is the need of more school room. The pressure upon the public school facilities by the youth of the town has been alluded to in a general way from time to time, but no specific evidence has been produced showing the actual state of affairs, and no official declaration on the subject having as yet emanated from the Board of Education, the public has not become seriously impressed with the importance of the need for more school room. An inquiry as to the present seating capacity of each school, the present registration of pupils, and the coming year's prospective growth in the several school districts shows the situation to be as follows:

School No. 7 (Fairview) has a seating capacity of 356 pupils; the registration in January was 336, and the average attendance 316. There appears a surplus of seating capacity over registration, but as in the Center School and all the other schools when the seating capacity is compared with class room requirements, there are a few vacant seats in some class rooms and a deficiency in other class rooms. Inquiry in the Watsessing School district as to future building projects results in a report that 30 houses will be built in 1906. This includes a block of seventeen houses in Llewellyn avenue which may not materialize, but assurances have been given by the owners of the property that the houses will be built this year.

The summary of the school room situation embraces the five large school houses of the town. The other schools are the High School, Brookdale School and the branch school at the city line, known as No. 6. None of the unclaimed buildings can afford any relief for the first named 30. In fact School No. 6 is crowded now, and additional class room is needed there. Various suggestions have been put forward as a solution of the school room difficulty. The plan of renting buildings has been suggested, but it is an unsatisfactory one. Present day public school requirements make it both difficult and expensive to try to utilize buildings for public school purposes that were erected only for private dwelling purposes. School-houses today are erected in accordance with the most approved scientific methods of sanitation, ventilation, heating and lighting, and parents naturally want their children to attend the best and safest school-house, and if the makeshift of fitting up dwelling houses for school purposes resorted to there would be trouble with the parents whose children were allotted to such schools. The only satisfactory solution is to enlarge some of the present school-houses, and when the work is undertaken it should be of a scope sufficient to anticipate the needs of at least five years.

The next question is which schools to enlarge. That the Fairview School is one that should be enlarged is beyond dispute. Brookside might be suggested as another, but a new school in Brookdale is a coming necessity, and when it is built it will be large enough to take in some of the present territory of the Brookdale School, and hence any present enlargement of that school is not deemed advisable or necessary.

The enlargement of the Watsessing School, it is thought, offers the best remedy for relief. With the Fairview and Watsessing school-houses enlarged by the addition of several class-rooms to each of them, the Center School and Berkeley School districts could be limited in area, and the number of pupils reduced to the comfortable capacity of the class-rooms in each of those schools. Some people who have viewed the schools, and have made a considerable study of the opinion that the enlargement of the Fairview and Watsessing schools affords the most economic way out of the difficulty.

School No. 4 (Centre School) has seating capacity for 558 pupils and the registration is 565, and average attendance 454. "Considerable room to spare there," some one will say. But in order to rightly understand the seating capacity of a school-house the subject should be treated with respect to class-rooms, and viewed from that point the situation at the Centre School is as follows:

Grade No. seats in room No. pupils registered next yr.'s Jan. 1906. class.

X. 50 20 30

X. C. 50 20 30

I. A. 48 20 30

I. B. 48 20 30

II. 48 20 30

III. A. 48 20 30

III. B. 48 20 30

IV. 48 20 30

V. 48 20 30

VI. 48 20 30

VII. 48 20 30

VIII. 48 20 30

565 565 565

It will be noted that in some instances the seating capacity of a class room exceeds the registration of pupils for that particular class, and there are two or more vacant seats in the class room, but these vacant seats are not available for another grade or class in which the registration exceeds the seating capacity of the class room. That is the over-crowded fourth grade pupils cannot be seated in the eighth grade class where at present there appears to be now—A.M.

## MUSICAL INSTRUCTION.

Miss Grace Willocks will resume instructions on the piano September 11th. Residence and studio, 37 Orchard street. Arrangements can be made now.—A.M.

## TAX APPEALS.

Railroad Companies Petition the State Board of Equalization of Taxes to Reduce Assessments Made by the State Board of Assessors on Second Class Railroad Property or Increase Assessments Made by the Local Assessors on Adjoining Property.

The railroad companies have carried to the State Board of Equalization of Taxes an appeal from the assessment levied on second class railroad property by the State Board of Assessors. The assessed value of second class railroad property in this town as fixed by the State Board of Assessors is \$29,080. This does not include the main stem property, also assessed by the State Board of Assessors. The total sum of second class railroad property assessed in this town is as follows: Delaware, Lackawanna and Western Railroad, \$2,240; New York and Greenwood Lake Railroad, \$2,707; Watchung Railroad, \$2,803; Morris Canal and Banking Company, \$1,303. The railroads formerly paid a tax rate of 1 per cent on second class property and the town got \$290.80 from the State. In 1905, in accordance with the change in the tax law, the State Board of Assessors certified to the local Board of Assessors the sum total of valuation of second class railroad property in this town, namely, \$290.80, with directions to add that sum to the local ratables and apply the local tax rate to the same. The consequence was that if the railroads had paid the town would have got \$368.28, instead of \$290.80, as formerly. But the railroads did not pay and have prepared to fight. The claim is made by the railroad companies, through their attorneys, that the State Board of Assessors applied higher valuations to the railroad properties than the local assessors did to adjacent property. The railroads now demand that the State Board of Equalization of Taxes either reduce the railroad property assessments or raise the valuations made by the local assessors to correspond with the valuations fixed by the State Board of Assessors.

To fortify their case before the State Board the railroad companies have had copies of extracts made from the tax duplicates in the towns in which second class railroad property is assessed, and to be used for purposes of comparison. Two hundred appeals have been filed with the State Board of Equalization of Taxes by the railroad attorneys and the assessments will probably be tied up in the courts.

Members of the Legislature are struggling with the problem of equal taxation and are endeavoring to frame a bill that shall conform to the constitutional requirement and at the same time satisfy the parties in interest, including the political factions in the Legislature.

Dr. Morgan to Speak on Labor.

An announcement of more than usual interest is made, to the effect that Dr. William H. Morgan of Newark will speak next Sunday, February 14, in Montclair on the labor question. He has been invited to address a meeting in the First Congregational Church on Fulton avenue at 4:30 o'clock in the afternoon. Dr. Morgan is a well-known speaker on this engrossing subject. He has a wide acquaintance with laboring men, and is thoroughly informed regarding their situation and demands. In fact, the workers themselves recognize him to be an impartial authority, and have sought his aid in adjusting grievances and strikes.

Dr. Morgan is not alone well informed; he is also broad-minded and eloquent. He discusses the vexed question of labor unions without favor or prejudice. He will be listened to in Montclair, as elsewhere, with the keenest interest.

The possibility of another coal strike of far-reaching magnitude renders his choice of subject particularly timely, while his gifts as an orator bespeak an afternoon of rich intellectual enjoyment to those priviledge to hear him.

The committee in charge announces that all seats will be free, and that fine music has been provided for the occasion.

Empire Theatre.

The coming of Bertha Kalich to the Empire Theatre, Newark, in Maurice Maeterlinck's dramatic masterpiece, "Mona Vanna," has already excited wide interest not only among literary and artistic people of Newark, but among regular theatre-goers as well. The production is said to be one that appeals to all classes, inasmuch as the lines are extremely beautiful in a poetic way, and the story itself is full of dramatic interest. This combination is very unusual, especially in the work of modern playwrights.

Firemen's Fair.

President William L. Johnson Wednesday night at a meeting of the Bloomfield Firemen's Relief Association appointed the following plan and scope committee to arrange for a fair to be held at the Central fire house during May: Seymour P. Gilbert, T. Howell Johnson, Thomas F. Cogan, Archie M. Heath and James Y. Nicol. They will report at a special meeting to be held later. A number of applications for relief were granted.

## PARENTAL SCHOOLS

The Subject of a Paper Read by Superintendent of Schools George Morris at a Meeting in the Parish House of the First Presbyterian Church—A Human Plan of Dealing with Incurables.

This paper was read by Superintendent George Morris before a meeting held in the parish house of the First Presbyterian Church on January 24, 1906, and is published by the request of a number of people who were present on that occasion.

You all probably know something of our State school for boys, better known as the Reformed School for Boys at Jamesburg and our State School for Girls at Trenton, but possibly the term Parental School is new to many of you. The names of the first two of these institutions—Reformed School and Reformatory—indicate the nature of the work being done within their confines. The greater part of the inmates of all three institutions are boys or youths, girls or very young women who have committed crimes of a more or less serious nature, or who have poorly developed ideas of morality. They have reached these institutions by commitment of the court, partly because of the bad influence they were exerting over other young people, and also with the hope that a complete change of environment might lead them to adopt better habits of living. These schools are handling their problems in a very satisfactory manner and are producing splendid results as a careful study of their statistics will show.

But educators have long realized that there is another problem which in some respects is much like the one just outlined, but which possesses certain features making it call for a different solution.

In addition to the young people found in our reform schools there is another class needing careful attention.

We find in almost every community having a school system of any size, a few truants, a small percentage of pupils who have lost all respect for the authority of parent or school, still another small number who are practically homeless, and some who are wholly homeless because they have sold their last possession. In some of these so-called homes the children have little opportunity for mental development because the parent has scant sympathy with anything that will keep the child from earning a few dollars, while to others the children are surrounded by an atmosphere so full of vice, crime and immorality that in a few years the innocence of young boyhood and young girlhood is likely to give place to a career of crime or a life of debauchery and shame. You will probably agree that the question of the proper care of these young people presents an important problem.

It is best for the school and the community that the truant be allowed to play truant indefinitely, that the incorrigible be allowed to continue to practice his open defiance of authority, that the parents of the other pupils think the seed destined for the truant to bring forth a fruitage of anarchy and revolution in later years? Shall we leave the young boy in an environment that will probably lead him to a life of vice and crime, and the young girl surrounded by influences that will be almost sure to make a wreck of her life? All these young people, the truant, the incorrigible, and the child coming from the home of vice, exert influences upon the life and atmosphere of the school that are antagonistic to its proper development. Yet, if these truants prove stubbornly persistent and the incorrigibles absolutely irrepressible, after all we can do at present is either to send them to one of our overcrowded reform schools to spend two or three years of the most susceptible period of their lives. In the company of young criminals or degenerates, or to turn them loose upon the streets to earn out a future for themselves, including the political factions in the Legislature.

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## ASSESSORS QUESTIONED

AS TO THEIR